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ABSTRACT

As colleges have grown in size and complexity, there has been an increasing need for student personnel workers to deal with demands for service, requests for grants and loans, and pressures from outside agencies. Routine tasks, however, do not fully utilize the talents of professionally trained activities personnel. These professionals can, and should, help facilitate a positive learning climate through collaborative efforts with all college resource persons. The best way to do this is for service workers to assume the role of Activities Learning Specialists, a change that would, among other things, be responsible for collaborative development of learning activities appropriate to classroom and out-of-class experience. (Author/PC)

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STUDENT DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS AND CHALLENGES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE STUDENT PERSONNEL PROFESSION

Looking Back

While higher education was still in its infancy in this country, the president traditionally handled all administrative chores associated with running a college. Later, when it became impossible for one person to manage the total college, librarians were hired to catalog materials necessary for instruction and deans were hired to control students. These deans were the first student personnel workers, although they were not known by that name until much later. From these beginnings, student personnel work had its start. Its mission clearly was regulatory at first, then later service oriented, to handle a myriad of student needs.

Record keeping, advisement, testing, placement, housing, recreation, and discipline functions dominated the student personnel profession. But there was more of the same to come. More demands for service, more grants and loans, more problems to solve, more records to keep, more pressures from outside agencies, more diversification of college curricula and programs led student personnel to try to respond to all the needs of students. Thus, the regulatory and service functions of student personnel became the backbone of the profession and became accepted by educators as the profession's primary roles. But are they?

Where Are We Today?

For the time being, it is true that much of our profession is still regulatory and service oriented. This condition of student personnel can be shown analogously to a football specialty team. Student personnel handles the kickoffs (orientation), fourth down plays (get us out of trouble), receiving team (admissions), point-after (placement), water-boy and band-aid crew (salvage the casualties and counsel the problems), and even the half-time show (student activities and entertainment). The specialty team is important, but at the same time it may be the first to get cut from the squad, and the "half-time show" usually is the first to go! To many critics, the specialty team is not as essential as the center (the academic core curriculum), the ends (specialist curriculum), or the quarterback (academic dean). Seen in the perspective of the football specialty team, student personnel is important, but not essential.

What About the Future?

Are we to remain regulators of behavior and dispensers of services? Can we become associated with a more developmental role in helping students? Perhaps so, and the key to our professional survival rests with our ability to become accountable for essential educational functions. We are considered "icing on the cake" to many administrators who are asking how our services affect the teaching roles of the total college.

When budgets must be cut, the president may have to decide if the institution can get along without the specialty teams. NOW is the time for student personnel professionals, especially the "half-time crew" to meet the challenge of survival and to establish their role as a viable, integral part of the institutional mission. We must cease to separate ourselves from the instructional processes of the college, and we must redefine our roles to include responsibilities that complement the learning processes of students.

HOW DOES THE CONCEPT OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT FIT INTO THE FUTURE?

The application of student development principles could be a most important accomplishment in establishing the role of student personnel professionals as integral parts of the institution, rather than as unnecessary "frills." This accomplishment could pave the way toward integrating cognitive and affective learning for students, resulting in students who are more self-directed and better able to cope with today's world.

Student Development - What IT IS and What IT IS NOT

Student development is the application of human development concepts in the post-secondary setting. Human development is a patterned, orderly life long process leading to the development of self-determination and self-direction which results in more effective behavior. The concept of student development affirms that in education, the cognitive mastery of knowledge should be integrated with the development of persons at the

affective level. Therefore, the development of students best results when both cognitive and affective development are essential components of the institutional mission.[1]

Student development IS an educational approach which integrates all resources of the college so that all professionals may contribute significantly to the development of students. Student development IS NOT just another name change for student personnel services. It IS NOT old wine in new bottles.

Student Development Versus Student Personnel Services

Our goal is to move toward developmental education, and we should understand what that means in terms of skills and competencies. The late Burns Crookston illustrated the difference between a service orientation and a developmental orientation as shown in the following methodology comparison chart.

CONTRASTING BEHAVIORAL ORIENTATIONS DESCRIPTIVE OF STUDENT PERSONNEL AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENTAL METHODOLOGIES

Student Personnel	Student Developmental
Authoritarian	Egalitarian
Reactive	Proactive
Passive	Encountering
Remedial	Developmental
Corrective	Preventive
Controlling	Confrontive
Cooperative	Collaborative
Status Oriented	Competency Oriented

[1]For more detailed discussion of student development see "A Student Development Model for Student Affairs in Tomorrow's Higher Education," Journal of College Student Personnel, 16:334-341, July, 1975.

HOW DOES STUDENT DEVELOPMENT RELATE TO STUDENT ACTIVITIES PROFESSIONALS?

In order to become more accountable developmentally, we need to look carefully at present activities, programs and structures. Are big name entertainers, ineffective student governments, dances, and other traditional programs relevant to the needs of ALL students? What about the evening student, voc-tech students, married students, and minority students? Most of these students could care less about participating in programs of these types.

Are we using the time of professionally trained people wisely by requiring them to perform routine "busy work" tasks that could be carried out by less trained persons? Probably not!

A commitment to student development also is a commitment to search for new, more meaningful roles to facilitate student growth.

A ROLE CHANGE FOR PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED ACTIVITIES PERSONNEL IS NEEDED

Some of the "fun and games" programs have merit and should be continued; however, they should not consume the time of the professionally trained personnel. Professional activities staff need to direct their attention to matters of a more urgent priority for the total college--that is, to facilitate a positive learning climate through collaborative efforts with all

college resource persons. Therefore, professional activities people would be more valuable to the college if they assumed the role of ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST.

How IS This New Role Different From the Traditional Role?

The following chart illustrates the service function versus the developmental function and shows how the Activities Learning Specialist would expand the traditional role of Activities Programmer.

SERVICE ROLE Activities Programmer	DEVELOPMENTAL ROLE Activities Learning Specialist
1. Duties are to plan and execute extra-curricular programs, advise student groups on procedural matters and on college regulations, and generally promote other activities in the "collegiate tradition."	1. Duties are to promote learning experiences for all students through use of total campus and community resources which interface planned classroom learning. Also supports self-directed behavior in student groups by coordinating leadership programs.
2. Emphasis or focus of programming on social and entertainment activities.	2. Emphasis or focus of effort on promoting collaborative ventures with broad impact on student development.
3. Special skills needed are boundless energy, intelligence, organizational ability, and a broad tolerance for ambiguity.	3. Special skills needed are expertise in designing learning activities, curriculum development, instructional strategies, management, and human relations.
4. Educational preparation in student personnel with emphasis in union programming.	4. Educational preparation in student personnel with emphasis on developmental aspects of human learning.
5. Facilitates programs designed primarily by union boards, activities staff, and/or student governments.	5. Facilitates cooperatively designed programs utilizing all college resources.
6. Supports the philosophy that the SUB is the "heartstone of student campus life."	6. Supports the philosophy that developmental growth activities need not be limited to the SUB.

7. Perceived by others as a "frill" employed to continue the tradition of "college life."	7. Perceived by others as a facilitative leader employed to complement the educational mission of the college.
8. Held accountable for organizing and conducting events and advising student groups.	8. Held accountable for general learning environment of campus and for collaborative efforts with college family.

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What Are Activities Learning Specialist Competencies?

The competencies and skills of the traditional student activities advisor used in planning, conducting, and evaluation programs for students also are useful in developmental programming. In other words, the basic skills are the same for solving many instructional problems as for solving problems in student activities. What is different mainly is the increased understanding of the problems of teaching and learning on the part of the Activities Learning Specialist. The working arena for the Activities Learning Specialist is broader, e.g., attending instructional meetings as well as student planning meetings, and working with college management leaders as well as with student leaders.

The Activities Learning Specialist must be just that--a Learning Specialist. Most traditional student activities are designed to promote involvement, usually operationally defined as attendance. The Activities Learning Specialist must learn, along with other college educators, to design activities to promote learning--some actual positive behavior change in students.

When there is an expressed need for learning experiences not available immediately in the academic curriculum the Activities Learning Specialist should collaborate with instructors, students, and others with appropriate expertise to plan special activities to meet these needs.

The Activities Learning Specialist should be a teaching strategist. Given certain specific teaching/learning problems, the Activities Learning Specialist must be able to collaborate with other instructors on reasonable solutions to these problems and to be able to assist in the execution of the strategies.

The Activities Learning Specialist must be a facilitative leader. The task is to join forces with others, not to coerce them; to demonstrate to colleagues that he/she will "lead" where they wish to go, not to reveal some new direction; to prove one's value to one's colleagues using inductive methods, not to announce one's indispensability.

What Are Examples of Activities Learning Specialist Challenges?

CHALLENGE: Campus I drama students are studying the fundamentals of acting. Many of these students have never performed before an audience, other than their classmates, and the students have expressed desires to experience other audience reactions. The class has no money to promote a performance of this type, and the campus theatre is unavailable for the remainder of the term.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Arrange for an audience by scheduling and promoting an event such as a noon hour theatre in the SUB. If the SUB is inadequate for this type of performance, other campus and community areas could be surveyed. This group also may benefit from performing at other schools, including colleges and public schools.

CHALLENGE: Several papers have been written by Campus II students in an experimental English class that have real value as discussion material.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Arrange for the publication and distribution of these documents, and collaboratively facilitate a lyceum series to discuss some of these issues.

CHALLENGE: Campus III is a two year commuter college. As a result, student membership in organizations is mobile. By the time students learn competencies in such areas as campus policies and procedures, and leadership skills, they leave.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Collaborate with organization sponsors, members, and others to plan leadership and procedural workshops each term. The business office could facilitate a treasurer's workshop, counseling could conduct a leadership skills seminar, and returning sponsors could coordinate a workshop for new sponsors.

CHALLENGE: Several government officials and persons running for governmental offices are planning to visit the Campus IV area.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Consult with government teachers and with other teachers who are interested in including their students, and arrange for an enrichment experience for students by supplementive classwork in a real-world encounter.

CHALLENGE: The dean and director of counseling are concerned that career counseling programs never get off the ground at Campus V. They want a well integrated approach to this program using all available resources.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Coordinate a series of career clinics, involving one academic division staff and their students at a time, bringing counselors and outside consultants in for the day long program.

CHALLENGE: Campus VI employs few classified employees. Therefore, most of the clerical work is the responsibility of work-study students. Campus VI is a community college with a 72 per cent student turnover each semester. Faculty and staff have expressed concern that by the time they train students, they transfer!

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Coordinate Work-Study Workshops each term utilizing expertise from the financial

aid office, secretarial science department, and other appropriate areas. The workshop could focus on responsibilities of the supervisor as well as responsibilities of the student. A handbook, designed as a helping tool, could be given to each person attending the workshop. Other workshops could be conducted such as Money Management, Time Management, Finding a Job in the Real World and Study Skills. Other colleagues such as counselors and LRC professionals could facilitate many of these sessions.

CHALLENGE: A well known poet will be touring the Campus VII area and could be booked economically for a day long workshop. Student Activities does not have sufficient funds to pay this person.

The ACTIVITIES LEARNING SPECIALIST COULD: Approach the humanities, fine arts, and other appropriate divisions about sharing the cost and benefits of a day long "Artist in Residence." Students could work informally with the poet in and out of class, and the poet could perform a noon or evening reading. Community groups may also wish to assist in sponsoring this program.

What Could Happen as a Result of this New Role?

1. Professional programmers will upgrade skills as facilitative learning specialists and will focus their primary emphasis on developmental programming.

2. Teaching/learning functions of the college will receive additional reinforcement as learning opportunities are broadened.
3. Revenues from student fees and auxiliary services will be applied toward more general student benefits.
4. Differentiated staffing would be encouraged so that advisement functions could be continued at the same time that developmental programming expands.
5. Instructors will perceive activities colleagues as integral parts of the college.
6. Students will be afforded additional opportunities for meaningful learning experiences.

Summary

Now is the time for professional activities people to meet the challenge of establishing their role as significant contributors to the educational mission of the college. This challenge could be met by adding the role of Activities Learning Specialist to the traditional responsibilities of student activities. In many colleges, the new role should not replace old roles, only complement them. The sphere of authority of the Activities Learning Specialist could be broadened to include responsibilities for collaborative development of learning activities appropriate to classroom and out-of-class experiences. The facilitation of these coordinated programs could be done better by a trained activities professional--an Activities Learning Specialist.